

## **Candidate Statement – Binari Almeida**

My name is Binari Almeida and I'm a third-year Arts/Law student majoring in Human Rights.

As a first-generation Australian and woman of colour from a working-class background, education has played a fundamental role in my life. My parents never had the opportunity to obtain a higher-education, and this inaccessibility to education created various barriers in their lives. They always instilled in me the importance of education as a ticket to a better life, which is why I am running to be your undergraduate representative on the Academic Board.

Over the past few years, we've seen the standard of education drastically falling, not just at Monash University, but throughout the country. We have seen numerous attacks on higher-education – doubled degree costs, closures of performing-arts facilities, staff cuts and unit discontinuations. As a law student I've seen how ill-thought out decisions by the university – e.g. examination arrangements – have debilitating impacts on mental health and create further disadvantage for already vulnerable students. Our education and mental health should never be compromised due to falling standards of our university.

As your representative, I will fiercely advocate to maintain a high quality of education; fighting for universal two-day extensions, fighting against unit cuts, and ensure the continued facilitation and support of academic growth through better access to resources and services for all students. I'm honoured to receive the support of our current representatives James Desmond and Chloë Polglaze, who have worked tirelessly for students this year, and I will continue this work if elected.